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## Okinawa in Postwar U.S.-Japan Relations

### Overcoming History, Correcting Misperceptions, and Forging Leadership for a “Win-Win-Win” Situation

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#### A. Introduction

#### B. History of Postwar Okinawa and U.S.-Japan Relations: trends, events, and politics

##### 1. Okinawa's Pre-Modern and Modern History

###### a. Independent Ryukyu Kingdom (琉球王国)

1. 1372, enters tributary relationship with China (recognition of China's superior, moral status in return for lucrative trade).
2. 1429, Ryukyu Kingdom unified
3. 1441, gift-bearing Ryukyuan representatives visit Kyoto, Shogunate regards these gifts as tribute, and confers rights to jurisdiction to Satsuma-han (薩摩藩). Mid-15<sup>th</sup> Century to Mid-16<sup>th</sup> Century—Golden Era.
4. 1609, Lord of Satsuma conquers Okinawa--political and military influence of Japan grows, but trade and moral (cultural) relationship with China continue-- “ dual subordination ”
5. 1853, Commodore Perry visit, signing of treaty of friendship
6. 1871, Meiji Government dissolves feudal domains; 1872 *Ryukyuhan* established
7. 1871, Taiwan incident leads to 1874 Sino-Japanese agreement in which Japan's sovereignty was essentially recognized, but with *Ryukyu shobun* in 1879, China protests but too weak--1894-1895 Sino-Japanese war ends all conflict over Okinawa (except during World War II and immediate aftermath); 1879, Ryukyuhan dissolved (*Ryukyu shobun*--琉球処分), becomes Okinawa-ken

###### b. Okinawa Prefecture

1. After *Ryukyu Shobun* and in particular after Sino-Japanese war, policy of “ assimilation ” (*Doikka* 同一化) begins, but Okinawans treated as second class

- citizens—reforms, voting, parliamentary representation delayed
  - a. land tax reform (1873-1881 in Japan proper; 1899-1903 in Okinawa);
  - b. national conscription law (1873 in Japan proper; 1896 in Okinawa);
  - c. election law (1890 in Japan; 1912 in Okinawa)
  - d. education
- 2. 1944-1945, Okinawa used as delaying battle in order for Japan to prepare for U.S./Allied invasion of main islands (240,000 people die in April-June fighting)
- 3. April 5, 1945, U.S. Admiral Nimitz Proclamation establishes military government on Okinawa
- 4. August 15, 1945, Japanese Government accepts terms of 13-point Potsdam Declaration of July 26 which stated: “ Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we (Allies) determine ”

## 2. The Origins of the Bilateral Okinawa Problem, 1945-1952

- a. Strategic interests, lessons of interwar period, Cold War
  - 1. 1942 JCS planning for overseas bases (JCS 183—JCS 570)
  - 2. 1945 Okinawa as a primary base
- b. Political and Diplomatic considerations
  - 1. Atlantic Charter ( “ no territorial aggrandizement ” !)
  - 2. Okinawa possessed both strategic and political aspects
  - 3. 1943 Masland Paper (return Okinawa)—formed the basis of State thinking
- c. Question of trusteeship: First Clash between Military and State
  - 1. Strategic trusteeships (Security Council); Ordinary trusteeships (General Assembly)
  - 2. Former Mandated territories versus Japanese territory
  - 3. Decision put off by Truman in October 1946
  - 4. Discussions shelved between State and Defense
- d. Early Peace Treaty (1947)—Okinawa discussion reopened
  - 1. Treaty (drafted by Borton) permitted Okinawa to be returned
  - 2. Military furious (JCS 1619/24); MacArthur even more so!
  - 3. Office of Far Eastern Affairs suggests base leasing/Tenno Message
  - 4. PPS study (PPS 10) and PPS/10/1 (trusteeship versus base leasing)
  - 5. Kennan trip to Japan and Okinawa (PPS/28--strategic interests require retention of Okinawa/what form that would take to be decided later)
  - 6. NSC 13—NSC 13/3 (May 5, 1949; “ permanent ” changed to “ long-term ”; put off treaty until Japan politically and economically stabilized)
- e. Movements Toward a Peace Treaty, 1949-1951
  - 1. State unhappy with stalemate and military opposition to treaty
  - 2. Importance of Japan as an ally and friendly post-treaty relations; Cold War
  - 3. John Foster Dulles appointment, May 18, 1950
  - 4. “ Seven Principles ” islands south of North Latitude 29 degrees to be placed under trusteeship
  - 5. Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Sebald, Johnson, Warner, Fearey) unhappy with territorial arrangement—suggest base leasing arrangement

6. Convince Rusk who convinces Acheson to check with military about needs
7. JCS-Acheson-Dulles meeting (January 1951)—Dulles forced to accept military's calls for retention of Okinawa
- f. Japanese Territorial Concerns
  1. Early planning by Japan begun in 1946 (study submitted in March 1947)
  2. Recognition in 1947 that U.S. and Allies would need bases in Okinawa and likely want to keep Okinawa
  3. Ashida *hatsugen* (June 1947)
  4. Attempts to relay desires by FM unsuccessful
  5. "Tenno Message"
  6. Yoshida and Foreign Ministry's studies
  7. Meeting with Dulles, 1951
  8. Continued attempts to relay desires to U.S.
- g. Peace Treaty and Article 3 (Residual sovereignty formula)
- h. "Practicable Arrangements"
- i. U.S. Government ratification (China recognition, Administrative Agreement)
- j. Japanese/Okinawa disappointment

### 3. The Road to Reversion, 1952-1972

- a. Amami Islands Reversion and Okinawa Policy
  1. Return Islands North of 27 Degrees
  2. Maintain Presence in Okinawa for as Long as Tensions Remain in the FE
  3. Desire for Japan to Increase and Expand its Military
- b. Okinawa Land Problem
  1. Forced expropriation of land
  2. Lump-sum payment (March 1954)
  3. Ryukyuan Legislature's "Four Principles" Resolution (April 1954)
    - a. Opposition to lump-sum payments
    - b. Payment of appropriate compensation
    - c. Payment of Damages
    - d. Opposition to any new expropriation of land
  4. Price Report (June 1956)
  5. "Island-Wide Protests" (*Shimagurumi Toso*)
  6. Suspension of Lump-sum Payment Plan (April 1958)
  7. Okinawa Delegation to Washington (July 1958)
- c. Japanese Interest and Desire for Return
  1. Land issue (Asahi report), Okinawa politics
  2. Yoshida, Hatoyama, Kishi's responses
  3. U.S. policy of preventing any Japanese (mainland) involvement whatsoever
- d. Okinawa Politics
  1. "Jinminto Jiken" (1954 arrest and sentencing of Senaga Kamejiro)
  2. Naha Mayoral Election (December 1956, Senaga Kamejiro Affair)
  3. Follow-up Election (January 1958, Kaneshi Saichi victory)
  4. Ryukyu Legislature Elections (March 1958)
- e. Review of Okinawa Policy—Return in by May 1958 General Elections ?

1. Return all unnecessary islands and land
2. Maintain bases as “ enclaves ”
- f. Review of Okinawa Administration
  1. Resolve land problem, expand local autonomy, increase aid
  2. Currency Conversion (from “ B Yen ” to U.S. dollar, September 1958)
  3. Liberalizing of Economy (finance, trade, etc. sectors)
  4. Appointment of High Commissioner (as opposed to Military Governor)
  5. Relax limits on Japanese involvement
- g. Security Treaty Revision
  1. Okinawa problem or Security Treaty Problem
  2. Question of whether to include Okinawa in treaty area
  3. Nuclear missiles (Nike, Hawk, etc)
- h. Equal Partnership and Okinawa Problem
  1. MacArthur-Kennedy-Reischauer
  2. Ikeda-LDP (focus on welfare)
  3. Chief Executive Ota Seisaku (step-by-step reversion)
  4. High Commissioner Paul Caraway (prevent Japanese involvement)
  5. Okinawa Reversion Movement (April 1960)
- i. Socio-Economic Gap and Increased Japanese Economic Involvement
  1. Kaysen Mission (October 1961)–raise Price Report ceiling (\$6m to 25m)
  2. Bobby Kennedy Visit to Japan (February 1962)
  3. Kennedy Statement ( “ Looking forward to the day ” and Revised Executive Order 11010 (March 1962)
  4. Increased Japanese aid
- j. Sato’s Call for the Return of the Islands
  1. July 1964 LDP Presidential elections
  2. January 1965 Meeting with Johnson
  3. August 1965 Okinawa Visit ( “ postwar not over until Okinawa returned ” )
  4. Full reversion versus partial reversion (January 1967)
  5. Establishment of Committee on Okinawa and Other Problems under Sato
  6. U.S.-Japan Conference on Okinawa and Asia/Pacific (Kyoto Conference), January 1969
  7. “ *Kaku nuki hondo nami* (Reversion without nuclear weapons, on par with the mainland) ” formula (March 1969)
- k. US Policy
  1. Reischauer’s Recommendation (July 1965)—study return of islands
  2. SIG-IRG/Ryukyu Islands Working Group (March 1966)
  3. Special Research Group (June 1966)
    - a. Recognized political situation in Okinawa made use of bases problematic; central government also calling for return
    - b. 1970 Problem (U.S.-Security Treaty and bases in Japan)
    - c. Base functions
  1. Johnson/Sato Meeting November 1967 (return “ within a few years ” )
- m. Use of Islands and Storage(貯蔵)/Introduction(持ち込む)of Nuclear Weapons

- n. Sato/Nixon Meeting November 1969 (reversion by 1972; Agreement signed on June 17, 1971, went into effect on 5/15/72)
- o. Okinawan Opinion (issues of crimes, chemical weapons, accidents—Koza riots)

#### 4. Okinawa After Reversion, 1972-1995

- a. Bases (large numbers relocated to Okinawa; 60% reduction in mainland versus 14% in Okinawa)—slow progress
- b. Economic Measures (Okinawan average income then 60% of Tokyo resident)
- c. Base-related crimes and accidents (roughly 5000 in post-reversion period)
- d. War-time/post-war issues (lack of trust toward central government/mainland)
- e. Okinawan requests (base reductions, consolidations, SOFA revisions, Basic Plan for the Site Utilization of Land Currently Used by the U.S. Military in Okinawa, Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century )
- f. End of the Cold War
- g. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of End of Pacific War

#### 5. The Current Okinawa Problem, 1995-today

- a. The rape incident (September 1995)
- b. Prefectural People's Rally (October 1995)
- c. Clinton-Hashimoto Summit/SACO Agreement (mid-term report, April 1996)
- d. Ota and Supreme Court ruling (August 1996)
- e. Prefectural Referendum (September 8, 1996)
- f. Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro Visit (September 17, 1996)
- g. Forced Land Leasing issue (special measures law, April 1997)
- h. Nago Plebiscite, Mayor Higa Tetsuya statement (December 1997)
- i. Nago Mayoral election (February 8, 1998)
- j. Ota Masahide defeat; election of Inamine Keiichi (November 1998);
- k. Futenma-Nago-Summit-Economic stimulus measures
- l. Naha Mayoral election—conservative victory (Fall 2000); Urasoe Mayoral Election—conservative victory (February 2001)
- m. Continued problems with bases (crimes, incidents, accidents)
- n. Other Policy Recommendations (see Eldridge report)
- o. 2002 Gubernatorial Elections—Inamine Victory
- p. Overall (worldwide) U.S. base realignments and Okinawa and Future of Marine Presence

#### C. Modest Proposals

- 1. Re-establishment of the Oki-kon (Advisory Group on Okinawan Issues)
- 2. Japanese sponsoring of an Okinawan Kaigi, along the lines of the 1969 Kyoto Kaigi, and perhaps a military-sponsored conference of media, public affairs, academics to talk about issues of mutual concern/interest
- 3. Institutionalizing Okinawan participation in bilateral discussions on basing issues
- 4. Establishment of internships for military in media, business, and OPG offices, and vice-versa to promote language, cultural, and professional exchange

#### D. Q&A

## **A. Introduction**

One of the first expressions I learned when I went to work on the staff of the headquarters of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific was “Bottom Line, Up Front.” As an academic, we seem to be genetically incapable of providing a “Bottom Line, Up Front.” If we have a conclusion, it is usually given at the end after a long time spent rambling. Nevertheless, I will try to give my conclusion right now: The gap in historical understanding and misperceptions of each other is larger than ever, and the lack of leadership is increasingly failing to bridge this ever-widening gap.

Since we are in Japan, and specifically Okinawa Prefecture, I would like to highlight these issues and put the spotlight on the Okinawan media, the Okinawan leadership, and the Japanese central government to do more in helping in these areas toward a long-term resolution of the so-called Okinawa problem, and not simply pass the blame onto the U.S. This, I have to say from the beginning, is not meant to suggest that the U.S. could not be doing more to promote mutual understanding; of course, there is always room for improvement. But, to be honest, I have been impressed with the continued and consistent efforts, of which I will speak later, of the U.S., and in particular of the Marines, to address the concerns of Okinawa. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same for the leadership in Okinawa or recently in Japan. This is not criticism for criticism’s sake, but meant as an appeal, by someone who has lived a long time in Japan and worked on Okinawa issues for an almost equally long time, for courage and leadership in honestly addressing the challenges Okinawa faces.

On the Okinawan side, there has, in my opinion, been a lack of leadership, a lack of dialogue, and a frustrating unwillingness by the media, OPG, and other groups to think beyond Okinawa’s perspective, Okinawa’s situation, to acknowledge the requirements of the central government in defense issues and U.S. military in performing its role in the alliance. The media portrays the U.S. military, especially the Marine Corps as stubborn, narrow-minded, and reluctant to change, but in my interaction with the Marines, I have found them to be some of the most motivated, intelligent, and dynamic individuals, who are both committed to and actually achieve innovative solutions. While balancing operational requirements and the need for deterrence, they are constantly looking at practical ways to alleviate the footprint in Okinawa. I do not see the same efforts on the Okinawan side.

Similarly, I have been disappointed with the relative lack of leadership on the Japanese side during the Koizumi years toward both the Okinawa issue and the recent base realignment talks.

Several years ago, I noted, in a report listing 51 policy recommendations, that an unstated consensus existed between the three sides for resolving the challenges facing Okinawa. I am less certain of that today because of the fundamentalism I am seeing on the Okinawan side, and apparent

lack of interest on the Japanese side in reaching viable solutions. However, I would like to urge that a win-win-win approach be explored:

By working with the U.S. military, instead of rejecting them, new opportunities and synergies can be found that directly benefit Okinawa Prefecture. These include expanded economic relations, education and human resource development, cultural exchanges, and professional training, as well as numerous others.

By moving ahead with whatever the final recommendations are for base realignments, instead of outright criticizing them, the speed in which the reductions and consolidations can take place will increase and the quicker the reduction in the impact the bases have will be.

In short, if every idea and option on base realignments, or opportunities to work together on a daily basis for education exchange, job fairs, etc. are censured and opposed, little change can happen.

This approach reminds me of the academic and other writings on Okinawa by so-called Leftists. Criticizing only, and not introducing viable, constructive, or even relevant ideas over the years, they actually have prolonged the Okinawa problem, rather than expediting its solution. This in my opinion is not only a great irony, but a great tragedy as well.

By being a part of the process rather than opposed to it, Okinawa has a greater opportunity to influence the results in a positive way.

After closely watching Okinawan affairs for 10 years, my question to Okinawa now is—Are you a partner in the process to address your concerns? And to the central government, my question is—do you still care?

Having just come from the headquarters of the MARFORPAC, based at Camp Smith in Hawaii, I can say with certainty that the U.S. not only cares, but is a full partner in the process. Symbolic of this is the fact that the Marines invited me—an academic with expertise on Okinawa and U.S.-Japan relations—to take my sabbatical at the headquarters. Similarly, the Marines adopted my recommendation a few years ago to send its Japan Foreign Areas Officers to study about Okinawa and U.S.-Japan relations under my care at Osaka University, as no schools in Okinawa volunteered to host them.

Long before I proposed this latter program to the Marines, I asked the leadership of both newspapers here, as well as that of the Okinawa Prefectural Government, to consider sending a young reporter, and in the case of the OPG, a young official from the Base Affairs Office, to Osaka University's School of International Public Policy and/or its Center for International Security Studies and Policy for as short or as long a time as they desired to conduct individual or joint research with me on Okinawa and U.S.-Japan relations, in the hope that new approaches to dealing with Okinawan issues would be found. I renewed this offer on numerous occasions following the arrival of the Marine FAOs, an Army FAO, and a Navy Olmstead Scholar. However, I never heard back from the

OPG or the newspapers. I believe words should be matched with deeds. The OPG and the newspapers should not criticize the U.S. military as insensitive or unwilling to change, while not doing anything themselves.

As I said at the beginning, academics tend to be long-winded, and I think I lived up to that reputation, as I am now only finishing my introductory remarks.

## **B. History of Postwar Okinawa and U.S.-Japan Relations: trends, events, and politics**

What I would like to do next is to give a quick overview of the postwar history of Okinawa and U.S.-Japan relations, pointing out certain key events, trends, and politics in the hopes that it might point the way to future.

As the handouts show, I have divided the postwar era into three periods—1945 to 1952, when the Allied peace treaty with Japan was signed, 1952 to 1972, when the United States returned Okinawa to Japanese administrative control, and 1972 to today, covering the years following reversion. In Appendix 1, I have illustrated the dynamics of Okinawa in postwar U.S.-Japan relations using circles of varying sizes to represent the relative influence of the three actors.

During the period from 1945 to 1952, when the U.S. occupied Okinawa during and after the horrific three-month battle of Okinawa until the time the Allies signed the U.S.-drafted Treaty of Peace with Japan, the U.S. influence vis-à-vis Okinawa, as well as Japan, was huge. As a result, U.S. policies prevailed, although there was a great deal of efforts to incorporate the views of Japan and Okinawa in the respective occupations. I say respective because the occupation of Okinawa was separate from the occupation of Japan. A U.S. military government directly led the Okinawan occupation because Okinawa was devastated after the battle and there was no existing governing structure left. This contrasted with that of Japan, in which the government was left in tact and Gen. MacArthur ran the occupation through the existing Japanese bureaucracy.

During the next period, 1952 to 1972, the relationship between the three changed dramatically. The desire of the people of Okinawa, which continued to be separated from mainland Japan as a result of the peace treaty, to return to Japan grew, and was inflamed by heavy-handed U.S. Army administration policies as seen in the expropriation of land here in Ginowan (Isahama) and elsewhere by bayonet and bulldozer. The Japanese government, now independent, and people of Japan also increasingly became unhappy with Okinawa's separation and both together and separately had a great influence on U.S. policy, eventually convincing the United States of the need to return Okinawa. As a result, I draw the circles as relatively equal.

In the post reversion period, I argue that the balance of power has significantly shifted to the Okinawan side and to a lesser extent the Japanese as to what influences Okinawa's future. In other words, one can say that after 1972, with the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, Okinawa in many ways

became a domestic issue as far as Okinawan affairs go and the ability of the U.S. to influence the situation was quite small. Hence the new shape given to the circles.

I originally used this diagram for research purposes, to explain how each of my books would examine the dynamics of the trilateral relationship. I use this diagram today for not only that purpose, but also to suggest that today, much of Okinawa policy is in fact dependent on Okinawa itself. True, the bases are in Okinawa and impact life here, but resolution of the different issues facing Okinawa—agreeing to the return of land, accepting the relocation and consolidation of facilities, etc.—is in Okinawan hands. Okinawa is not the victim that it often portrays itself to be, but is the main actor. Therefore, I believe it should use its influence to help the process, not derail it, because it not only affects Okinawa but also the larger U.S.-Japan relationship too. For this, responsible leadership, not demagoguery, is needed at all levels.

With this said, I would like to introduce in a chronological fashion some of the major events in postwar Okinawan history, and highlight some of the differences in historical interpretations and perceptions.

For Okinawans, the Battle of Okinawa, which killed more civilians than the combined deaths of both the Japanese Imperial Forces and our own, had both a devastating and near-permanent effect on its future. They felt that Japan abandoned them, using Okinawa in a sacrificial way to protect the homeland. It was the third major blow to Okinawans in their interactions with Japan—the first being the invasion of Japanese forces in the early 1600s and the eventual disposition of the Ryukyu Kingdom in the early 1870s to eventually become Japan's 47<sup>th</sup> prefecture. The Occupation forces did their best to provide for the civilians during and after the battle, even initiating democratic elections in the summer of 1945 for local councils. However, over the years, a number of policy mistakes and the poor quality of civil affairs officials led to a breakdown in the trust between the civilians and the U.S. military government authorities. As a result, the Okinawans, who had been so unhappy with Japanese rule and felt abandoned by them at one point, eventually began to desire to “return to Japan.” This desire became stronger when the draft peace treaty, which had Okinawa separated from Japan, was publicized in the press. It should be pointed out that this desire was not felt by everyone—public opinion surveys at the time show that opinion was divided four ways—those desiring outright independence, those favoring U.S. statehood, those favoring U.S. protectorship, and those wanting to return to Japan. Nevertheless, those in the last group continued to grow and grow until it reached a peak in 1969, when President Nixon officially agreed to return Okinawa.

The U.S. State Department took these demands to return home to Japan seriously. In the end however, our military won the debate within policy-making circles to not return Okinawa, which I think with the benefit of hindsight, was a mistake. Importantly, however, John Foster Dulles, who led the negotiations, agreed that Japan should have “residual sovereignty” or *senzai shuken*, over

Okinawa. In other words, Okinawa continued to be Japanese territory, but would be administered for an indefinite period of time. (Appendix 2 illustrates the various pressures on Dulles to reach a solution to this very complicated process, and the map shows which Japanese territories continued to be administered by the U.S. as part of Article 3 of the peace treaty.)

For Okinawans, this decision was the fourth blow in their relations with Japan. They believed that the Japanese government did not care about them and left the Okinawans to American rule. Many still believe that today, which in my opinion affects how the Okinawans view the central government.

However, as far as the history goes, nothing could be further from the truth. The Japanese government, despite not having diplomatic rights, did the best it could do to have Okinawa retained by Japan in fact as well as in name. Their efforts were critical to influencing the U.S. decision-making process and supporting the arguments of the State Department for retention by Japan.

I published this book two years ago.<sup>1</sup> It is based on interviews I did with State Department officials at the time, including George Kennan, the author of the “X article” and father of containment, and numerous U.S. and Japanese foreign ministry declassified documents. Although I did not set out to do it, I ended up overthrowing the perception built up over the years, due to emotions and poor academic research, that the Japanese were indifferent to the plight of Okinawans at the time. Although it won two national book awards (the Asia-Pacific Award and the Suntory Award for History and Civilization) in Japan and was introduced in a dozen magazines, newspapers, and journals, for some reason it never appeared in the Okinawan press to my knowledge. I guess it flew too hard in the face of conventional, albeit incorrect, wisdom.

The concluding chapter of the book, however, is not about the need for intellectual honesty in research but rather talks of “what if, Okinawa was returned at the time of the Peace Treaty in 1952 and basing rights, along the lines of those of today, were given.” I note that the future would have been different in five ways—1) it would have acted to gain trust of Japanese that the United States did not have territorial ambitions; 2) it would have limited any serious basis for criticism internationally since Japan, as a sovereign state, would have granted the U.S. the basing rights; 3) the early return of Okinawa would have allowed it to economically and socially develop along with, or at least proportionately to, Japan’s phenomenal economic growth throughout the postwar period; 4) were retention realized, Japan and Okinawa would have been able to share a similar postwar experience, but instead they were not really reunited until 1972; and 5) retention of the islands by Japan would have made the Japanese government more responsible for its own defense and thus more proactive in that regard.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Eldridge, *Okinawa Mondai no Kigen: Sengo Nichibei Kankei ni Okeru Okinawa, 1945-1952* (Nagoya University Press, 2003). This is the Japanese translation of my *Okinawa in Postwar U.S.-Japan Relations, 1945-1952: The Origins of the Bilateral Okinawa Problem* (New York: Garland-Routledge, 2001).

Again, these were all historical “ ifs, ” counterfactuals in academic language. I would like to return to what really happened.

Okinawan disappointment to the peace treaty contents ran high in the early 1950s. One respected Okinawan scholar, who was a young man at the time, said it and the 1953 return of the Amami Islands to the north deflated their hopes. He may be right, but I would argue that it also provided the basis for an explosive mix of feelings. These passions were ignited in the early to mid-1950s during the military land problem in which we expanded the scale and scope of our bases at a rapid rate, forcefully removing people from their land. Eventually, in June 1956, after the release of a Congressional report that was seen as unsympathetic to the Okinawan demands for proper compensation, a huge island-wide protest known as the *Shimagurumi Toso* began. While the U.S. authorities eventually reexamined their policies and agreed to properly compensate the Okinawans landowners, the construction had already been completed and the reputation of the U.S. reputation was greatly damaged in the eyes of the Okinawans and the Japanese.

Because of these and other problems, such as the increase in voters supporting leftist candidates, the U.S. began seriously considering the return of Okinawa around this time. In fact a secret study was done between 1958 and 1959 at President Eisenhower’s direction to examine the possibility of establishing a base enclave and returning the rest of Okinawa. In the end, Eisenhower was not happy with the results of the study and decided not to return Okinawa.

Although the military probably would have wanted it, the U.S. policy at the time, as I mentioned earlier, was that the administration of Okinawa was temporary, not permanent, and that Okinawa was a part of Japan. But the U.S. at the same time was frustrated with Japan’s lack of efforts in its defense and alliance affairs. When the Security Treaty was revised in the late 1950s, the U.S. hoped to include Okinawa in the treaty area, which would have expedited the return of Okinawa, but the Japanese Diet was opposed to Japan expanding its defense obligations. As a result, a key opportunity for Okinawa to be returned was lost. This was the fourth blow in Okinawa’s relations with Japan.

It would take another decade before the decision was made to return Okinawa, following the build up of political pressure to return Okinawa. By this time, Japan was becoming an economic power and had assumed a larger defense, and diplomatic role, and had explicitly agreed to the continued use of Okinawa by the U.S. military.

The contents of the agreement to return Okinawa was not, however, what the Okinawans desired and they demonstrated against the agreement and boycotted the reversion ceremonies. This confused U.S. and Japanese policy-makers, who thought they had worked hard to realize the goal of Okinawans to see the return of Okinawa to Japan. This was the fifth blow.

The Okinawans were dissatisfied with the reversion due to the fact that the bases remained and actually increased in function. in other ways as well. The economic situation worsened with

inflation, mass unemployment occurred with base layoffs, and general dissatisfaction with the “Japan-ization” of Okinawa became prominent. When the oil shocks hit Japan in the early 1970s, the already bad situation in Okinawa worsened. The situation was not made any better by the policies of the center-left governor at the time, Yara Chobyō, and his successor, who took an antagonistic stance vis-à-vis the central government and called for greater autonomy in its affairs. (I would like to recommend this book to everyone, as it is the only book to cover the entire post-reversion period.<sup>2</sup>)

In 1978, a conservative governor Nishime was elected to office. He promised to rebuild the relationship with Japan that had been damaged during the Yara-Taira years, much like the current governor, Inamine, did after 8 years of the Ota administration. Using his network with the central government and the ruling party, having formerly been a member of the House of Representatives, Nishime plowed forward with in his attempts to both modernize Okinawa and bring it closer to Japan. At the same time, he helped to promote Okinawan culture by pushing the construction of Shuri Castle, the establishment of the Prefectural University of the Arts, and numerous other projects. He also helped to make in Okinawa a center for international student exchange in an attempt to fulfill Okinawa’s reputation as a gateway between Japan and the rest of the region.

After serving 12 years, he was eventually voted out of office however. There are two reasons for this. First is the dog-eat-dog style of Okinawan conservative politics—many in the LDP felt he had not shared power fairly, and thus did not support his third bid for office, especially when he said he was only going to be in office for two terms. Similarly, businesses without a piece of the pie ended up supporting the other candidate. Nishime, it seems, had made too many enemies.

Yet another reason he was voted out had to do with the larger national and international situation—namely the end of the Cold War and the increasing demands for the peace dividend to be shared in Okinawa. People in Okinawa began to ask “Why after the end of the Cold War are bases still necessary in Okinawa?” As a result of this atmosphere, plus the fact that the pro-base Nishime publicly supported the Government’s proposed UN Peace Cooperation Bill, the anti-base Ota was voted into office, and reelected in 1994.

Ota, who is seen as an idealist and someone that was unwilling to compromise, was actually relatively pragmatic in the beginning and ended up surrendering his principles on some issues in the hopes that the central government would respond in kind. He increasingly came to resent the central government as it did not in his opinion adequately tackle the base issues. When the third East Asia Strategy Report was released in February 1995, declaring that 100,000 U.S. forces were still needed in the region, Ota saw this as meaning no change in the status quo on Okinawa. Shortly after the report came out, Okinawa commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the

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<sup>2</sup> Robert D. Eldridge, *Post-Reversion Okinawa and U.S.-Japan Relations: A Preliminary Survey of Local Politics and the Bases, 1972-2002* (Osaka: Center for International Security Studies and Policy, 2004), available at: <http://www2.osipp.osaka-u.ac.jp/~eldridge/Articles/2004/Postreversion%20Okinawa%20study.pdf> .

Battle of Okinawa with the establishment of the peace park in Itoman, an emotional time for him, a survivor of the battle, and the rest of the people of the prefecture. It was shortly after the end of these commemorations that the tragic rape of a schoolgirl by three of our servicemen happened, shocking Okinawans, Japanese, and Americans alike, touching off the present-day “Okinawa problem.”

Viewing the response of the Japanese government as lacking sincerity, a mass rally was held nearby here in Ginowan to protest the rape and call for the proper behavior of U.S. personnel and a revision of the SOFA, among other issues. Some 85,000 people reportedly turned out, making it the largest rally since the time of the Shimagurumi Toso of the 1950s. Importantly, in a show of solidarity, every political party and most civic organizations were represented.

The following year a non-binding prefectural referendum was held, calling for the reduction of the bases and the review of the SOFA. Unfortunately for Okinawa, a large number of voters boycotted it, exposing some of the underlying fears about the effect of the reduction of bases on Okinawa’s economy among other reasons.

In the meantime, the U.S. and Japanese governments established the SACO process, reaching an agreement in December 1996. Everyone here is familiar with that so I won’t go into it in detail here.

Despite this process, Okinawans were unhappy with the center-piece of the agreement—the conditional return of Futenma, much like they were unhappy with the Reversion Agreement some three decades before. This could be called the 6<sup>th</sup> Blow. Describing the agreement as no more than a shell-game, protests emerged, and Ota’s ineffective handling of the situation and his eventual opposition to the relocation of Futenma within the prefecture to Henoko led to the chilling of relations with the then Prime Minister.

Eventually, business leader Inamine emerged as the candidate of the conservatives who would restore relations with the central government. By chance the Prime Minister had changed as well, allowing a fresh start. That Prime Minister, Obuchi, had known Inamine for many decades, and while in office, they formed a true partnership. Symbolic of this perhaps was the designating of Okinawa as the site of the 2000 G-8 Summit. Ironically and unfortunately, Obuchi died from a massive stroke in the spring just before the summit. It was particularly unfortunate because his successor, Mori, had almost no connection with Okinawa and the momentum created during the Hashimoto and Obuchi years was lost. While some might disagree, I would argue that it has not been regained since, which is where we find ourselves today. If the year 2000 were the summit—in other words, highest point—then today we are in the valley. My only hope is that somehow the relationship can get jump started again.

This does not mean that the central government has done nothing over the years—indeed it has, and the OPG and media should more publicly recognize it and appreciate it. Some examples

include the establishment of the position of Ambassador for Okinawan Affairs, the designation of Okinawa as the summit site, the numerous committees created between the national and prefectural governments to allow a direct dialogue on Okinawan affairs, the other privileges Okinawa has been granted, the huge amounts of money provided to Okinawa, etc. But the passion of the current prime minister towards Okinawan issues, in particular the base realignments, has been correctly called into question.

Similarly, I believe the OPG should be doing much more to promote true dialogue on these and other issues, both with the central government and with the U.S., rather than just making demands. Over the past four or five years, I have been amazed at the lack of personal and informal interaction by the current OPG leadership with its American military counterparts. This has hurt the dialogue tremendously. Rather than limiting the opportunities to meetings at the Tripartite Liaison Committee or other formal venues where the press is in attendance, much more interaction needs to be taking place formerly and informally. Much potential to partner together for Okinawa's future exists.

Okinawan concerns and requests, as seen from its history, are often quite legitimate and must be respected. But so are those of the central government and its treaty partner, the United States. Okinawa needs to have a more objective view of its history and the needs of the other parties. To do this, true leadership, is necessary. It will involve having a vision, moving in that direction, and not stopping to "play politics." I again call on all of Okinawa, especially its leadership, to be a partner in the process and not a spoiler.

C. I will briefly talk about a few proposals I have in mind, and then take questions.

(see outline, page 5)

D. Q&A

Appendix 1

Appendix 2